CM/ECF Version 4.0

A Guide to the New Features for Attorneys and Law Firm Staff

United States District Court,Western District of Louisiana
November, 2009
CM/ECF Version 4.0

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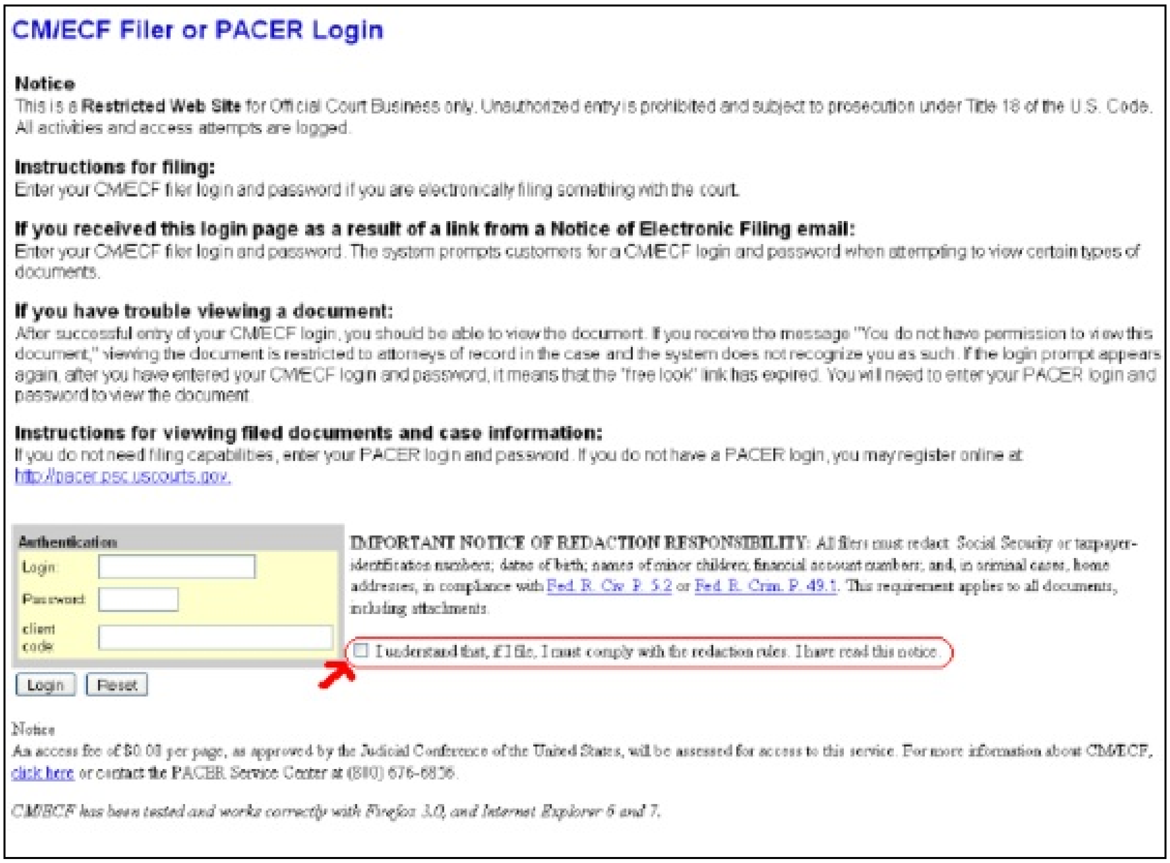
Version 4.0 Enhancements & Changes

DOCKETING CHANGES

Logging into CM/ECF

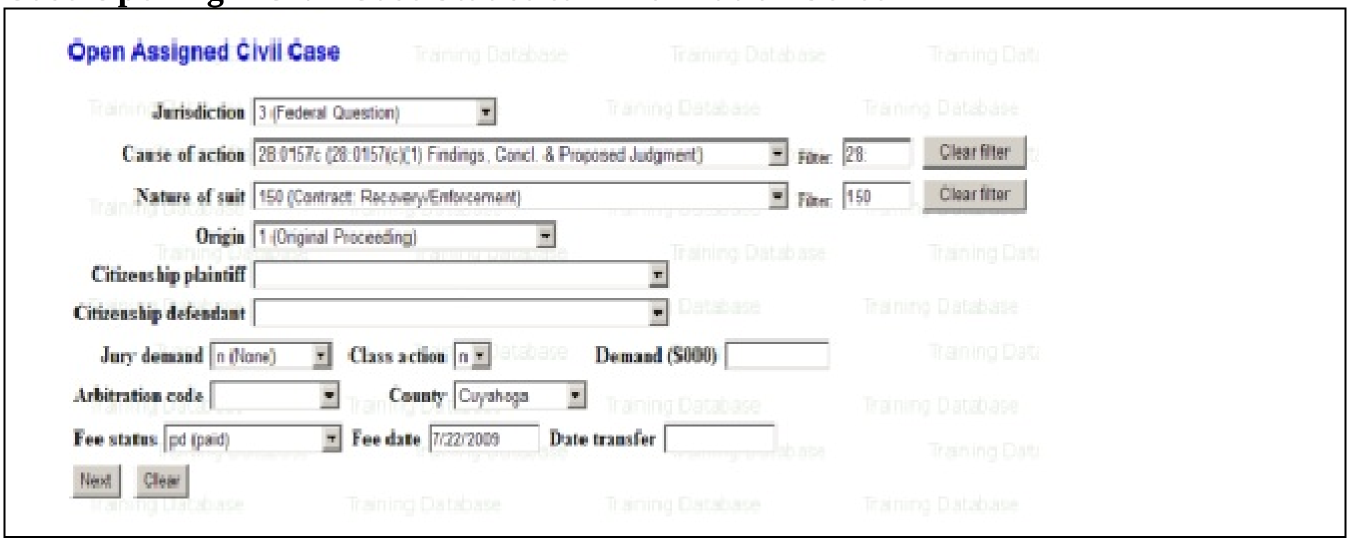
A check box was added to the login screen for users to acknowledge that they have read the redaction disclaimer. Attorney users must check this new checkbox before logging in. Hyperlinks to the specific Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure that cover the redaction requirements also were added to the login screen. In addition, the reminder question *Have you redacted?* was added to the final docket text review screen during docketing.



New User Interface for Civil Case Opening

The first and second case opening screens remain unchanged. On the third screen the *Nature of suit* and *Cause of action* fields were modified to permit the user to filter the items displayed in the picklist. The user can enter characters in the *Filter* field, which immediately narrows the dropdown list to just the items that match the string entered – functioning as a search tool. To change the filter, the user can type over the characters already entered, or click the **Clear filter** button. The **Clear filter** button, when clicked, returns the contents of the dropdown to the complete list.

Case Opening – Civil Case Statistical Information Screen

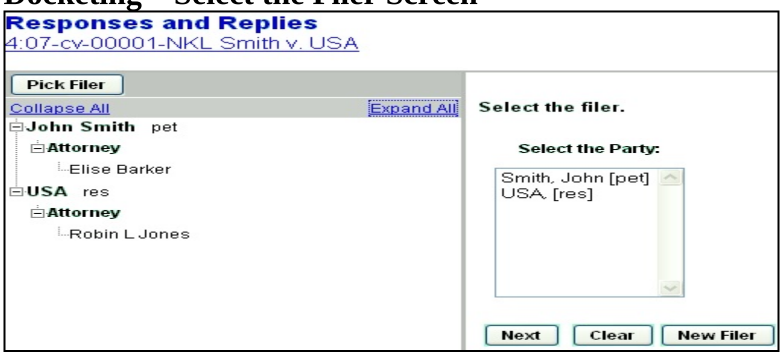


The procedure for docketing has been redesigned to process parties more efficiently, improve speed, and enhance the user's experience.

Selecting the Filer

The case participant tree is displayed in the left pane during docketing so users can readily see all case participants during the process of selecting the filers. The tree is displayed for reference purposes during docketing. All party selections will be made in the right pane. If a new participant is added during the docketing process, then icon controls will be visible in the tree for the new participant only. Please see below a description for each of the icons which may appear in the participant tree.

Docketing – Select the Filer Screen

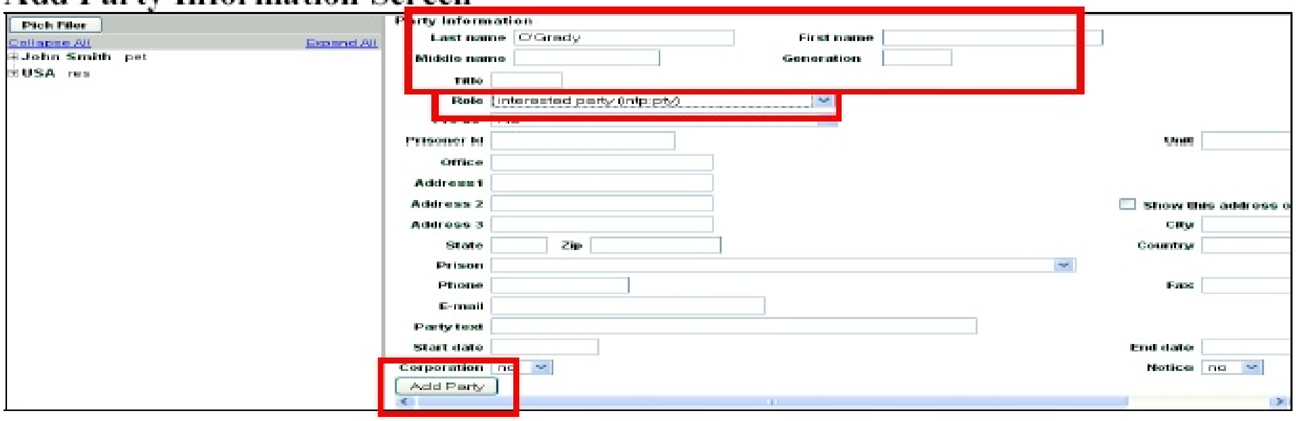


When selecting the filer, the right pane displays the existing parties and the case participant tree is in the left pane. Click the name of the party for whom you are filing the document, or, if the **Select a Group** option is presented and you represent all defendants or plaintiffs you may select a group by clicking in the circle next to the group.

To add a new party, the user should click the **New Filer** button located in the right pane. A new search screen will be displayed from which the user then can search for and add a new party.

To search for a new filer, type in the first three letters of the party's last name, or if a business, the first three letters of the business name. Be sure to scroll down through the list of names that come up on the screen. If the system finds the correct name, select the name already in the database to eliminate different versions of the same party name. If no match is found, click the **Create New Party** button and complete the Last Name, First Name and, if applicable, Middle Name and Generation fields. **Do not enter a party's address.** Select the correct role of the party and click the **Add Party** button.

Add Party Information Screen



After searching for, selecting, and adding a filer, the filer's name appears in the participant tree and is added to the party pick list and is highlighted in the list. The user can either:

- add an alias or corporate parent by clicking on the corresponding "add" icon,
- edit the party information by clicking on the pencil "edit" icon,
- delete the party by clicking the red X "delete" icon,
- add a new party by clicking on the **Add New Party** button at the top left of the screen.

When a new party is added, he/she is added to the party pick list, highlighted in the list and added to the participant tree in the left pane. To add more parties, repeat this process. Parties that are added to civil cases during docketing will have control icons in the participant tree so the user can add aliases, corporate parents, etc. for the party during this process. **There are no icon controls for existing participants in the participant tree during docketing**.

If a new participant is added during the docketing process, then icon controls will be available for the new participant only. **Attorneys may link themselves to a party but may not add other attorneys to the docket.** (Additional attorneys within the same firm may electronically file a notice of appearance to add themselves as counsel of record.)

Icons

The following table provides a description for each of the icons that may appear in the participant tree.

Icon	Description
	Delete this party from the case.
	Add new alias, corporate parent, or attorney.
	Copy attorney(s) from other parties in the case to this party.
	Edit the party, alias, corporate parent or attorney. Only displays beside actual names of participants, so if no participant has been added, this icon is suppressed.
	Change the name of the party.

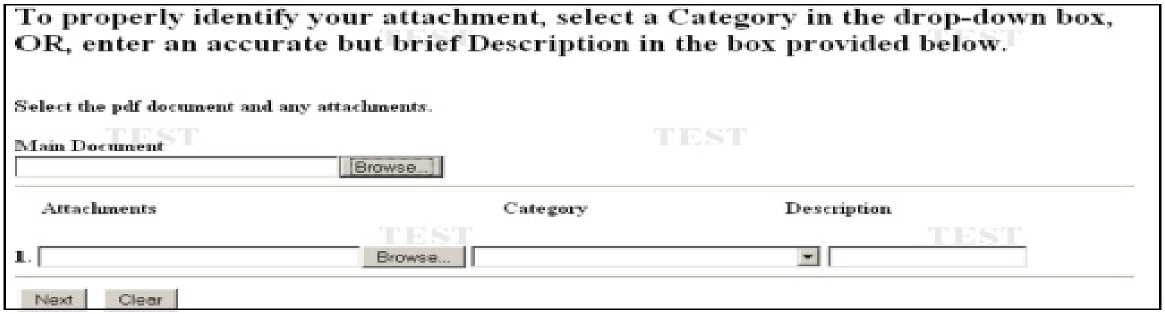
Additionally, the + and – icons for each branch expand or collapse the branch, respectively.

ADDING DOCUMENTS AND ATTACHMENTS

Release 4.0 includes modifications to the way documents and attachments are added and handled in CM/ECF. The changes include a new single screen for document and attachment uploading during docketing, and an improvement in the way attachments are numbered on the Document Selection screen.

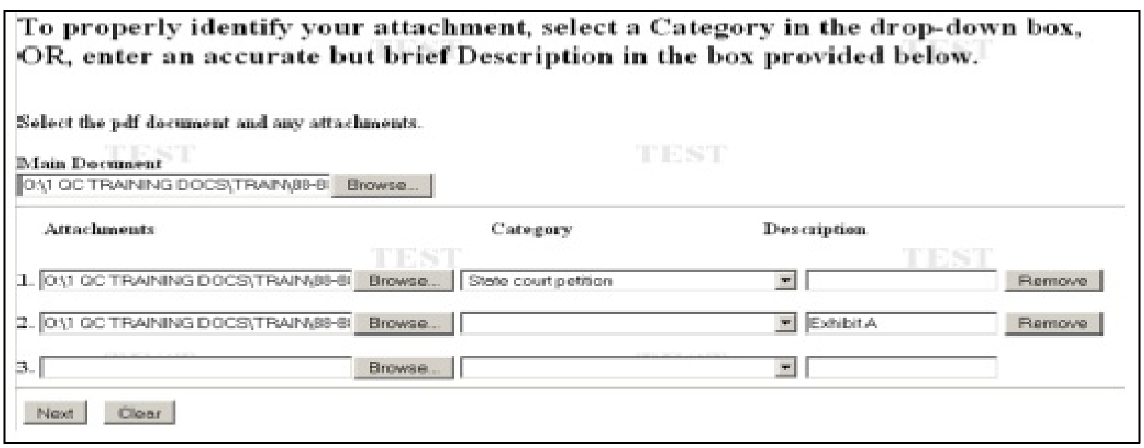
The process of adding a main document and attachments during docketing has been streamlined to only require one screen, shown below in its initial state.

Document Upload Screen – Initial State



After browsing and selecting the appropriate Main Document, the user should click the **Browse** button in the *Attachments* section to add the first attachment. Once a PDF document is selected, the user <u>**must**</u> select a Category or enter a Description to further describe the attachment. As the process of adding an attachment is completed, a new row will appear so the user can then add a second attachment if necessary. Additional rows will be added as needed.

Document Upload Screen – After Selecting a Main Document and Two Attachments



If only two attachments should be added, the user should leave the fields in the third row blank and then click **Next**. If additional attachments should be added, the user should click **Browse** for each attachment and then add the document.

If an attachment should be removed, the user should click **Remove**. If, for example, Attachment 1 is removed and there is a second attachment, Attachment 2 would become Attachment 1, etc.

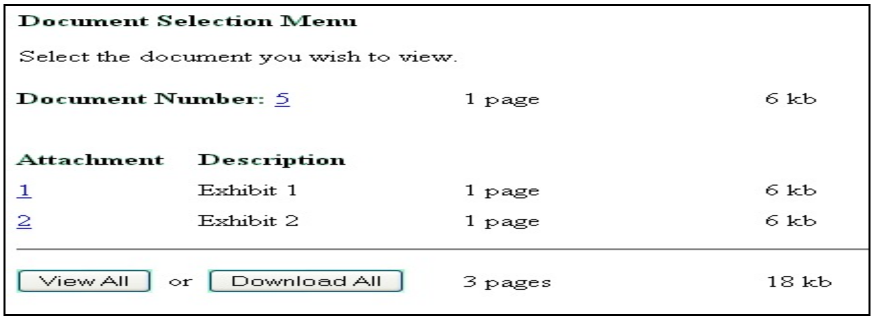
If an attachment file is incorrect and needs to be replaced, the user should click **Browse** again for the attachment and load a different document. If the user clicks the **Clear** button after adding documents and attachments, the screen will be returned to the initial state.

Document and Attachment Numbering

When viewing a document with attachments, the document selection screen was modified so that the attachments are numbered beginning with 1. This way, the attachment numbers are consistent everywhere they appear (e.g., docket text, the document selection screen). Previous versions of the software listed the Main Document as Part 1 and any attachments followed in numerical order causing Exhibit 1 to be Attachment 2.

Also, the file sizes and the total size of all of the documents for a docket entry are displayed on the document selection screen.

Document Selection Screen



Document Selection Menu

Select the document you wish to view.

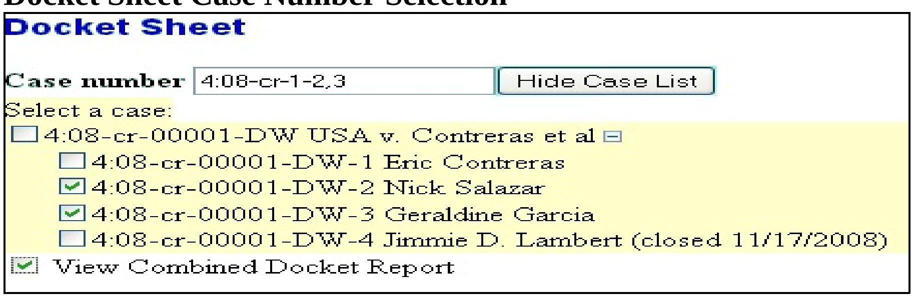
Document Number: 5		1 page	6 kb
Attachment	**Description**		
1	Exhibit 1	1 page	6 kb
2	Exhibit 2	1 page	6 kb
View All or Download All		3 pages	18 kb

DOCKET REPORT

Combined Docket Report – Criminal Cases

Users can now run a combined Docket Report for a subset of criminal defendants in a multi-defendant case. A new *View Combined Docket Report* checkbox will be displayed beneath the case number list when a case number for a multi-defendant criminal case has been entered and two or more of the criminal defendant cases have been selected. Selecting the *View Combined Docket Report* checkbox allows the user to run the combined form of the report for the chosen subset of defendants.

Docket Sheet Case Number Selection

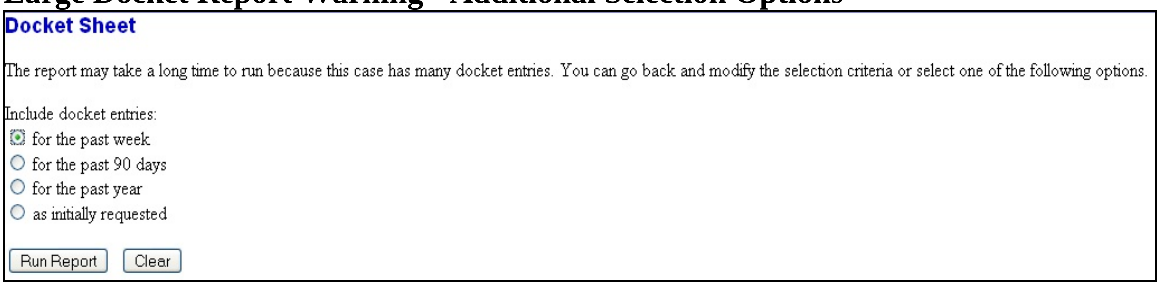


The combined Docket Report displays all of the defendant, party, and attorney information in the top section of the report for those defendants selected. The combined proceedings of the chosen defendants are displayed in the bottom section of the report.

Large Docket Report Warning

Depending on the selection criteria entered by the user, it is possible for a large amount of data to be included in the report output. A warning with additional options now displays when the report output includes more than 200 docket entries. Users are presented with options to help narrow the search to include docket entries for the past week, the past 90 days, the past year, or as initially requested.

Large Docket Report Warning - Additional Selection Options



CREATE APPENDIX

Entries Without Documents

A checkbox will be displayed for all docket entries, whether they have documents attached or not. If the user checks the box for a docket entry that does not have a document, the HTML version of the NEF will be included in the Appendix PDF, just as if a document would have been included if one existed.

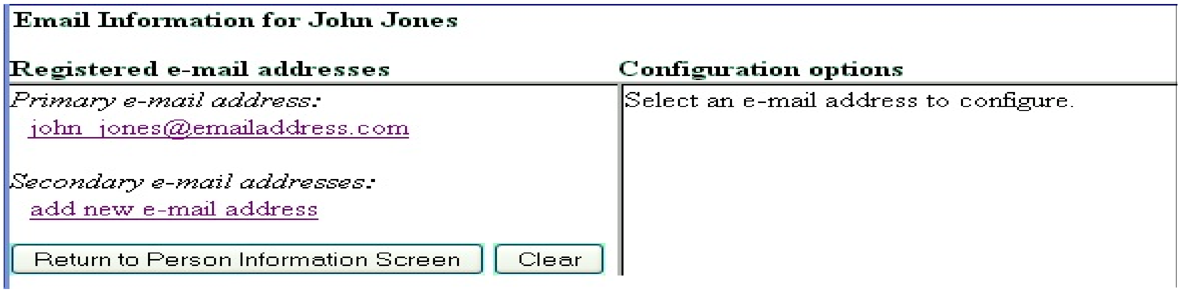
Hyperlink to District Court Case

The case number at the top of the Appendix is now a hyperlink to the docket sheet selection screen in the District Court's database.

MAINTAIN YOUR EMAIL MODIFICATIONS

The Email Information screen in Maintain Your Email has been modified to provide more streamlined functionality. Additional options are presented to the user rather than being hidden. Cutting and pasting multiple case numbers from one person account to another and/or from one delivery method to another is now allowed.

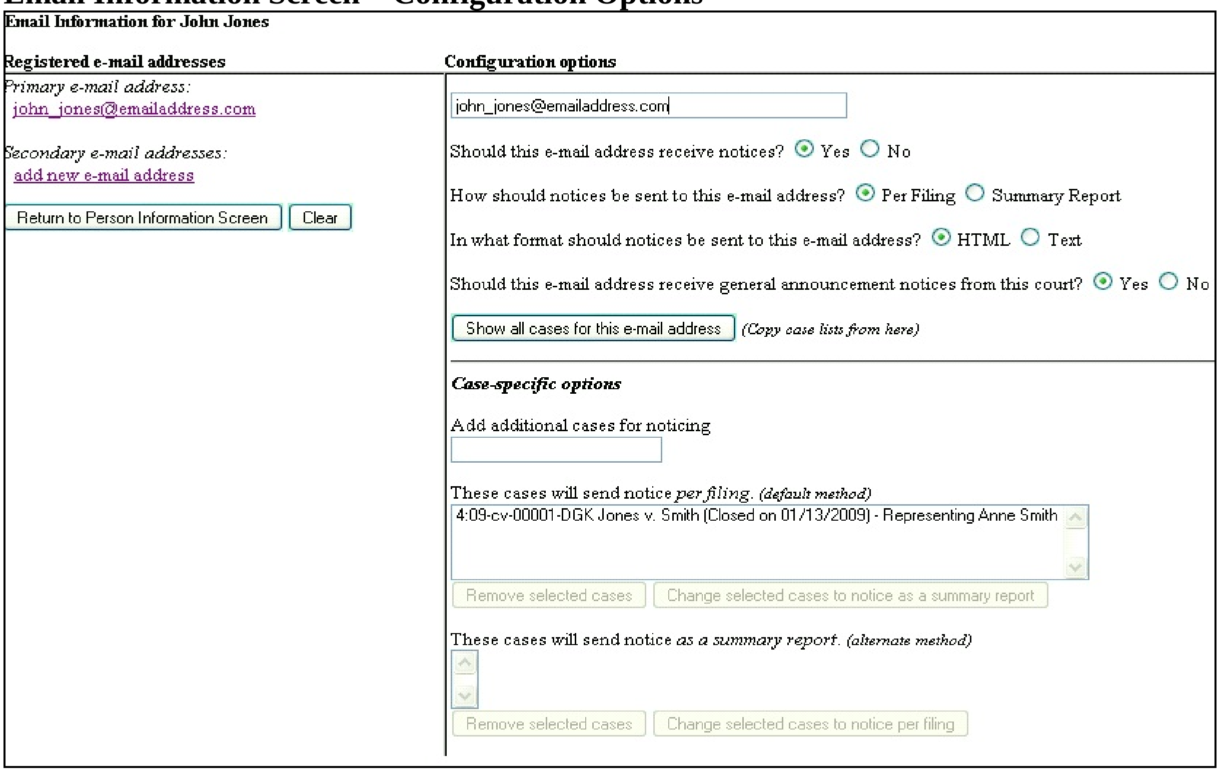
Email Information Screen – Initial Screen



The initial Email Information screen is divided into two panes. In the left pane, the primary email address and secondary email addresses, if any, appear as hyperlinks.

When the user clicks the primary or secondary email address hyperlink in the left pane, configuration options appear under the email address in the right pane.

Email Information Screen – Configuration Options



Following is an explanation of each of the options that appear above:

Option	Description
Should this e-mail address receive notices?	For the primary e-mail address, the default is **Yes**. To disable the primary address, select **No**. If set to **No**, the primary e-mail address will not receive Notices of Electronic Filings (NEFs). We recommend that this setting always be set to **Yes**.
How should notices be sent to this e-mail address?	Sets the default delivery method for notices sent to this address. If **Per Filing**, an e-mail will be sent for each individual NEF. If **Summary Report**, one daily summary e-mail notice that lists all the filings for that day will be sent; if this option is selected, an additional option is added to the screen: *Should this e-mail address receive a "no activity" notice when no summary noticing occurs?* If **Yes**, the Daily Summary Report e-mail will include the message *"no transactions found for this time period"* if no activity occurs in the cases for which the user is configured to receive summary notices. If **No**, then no e-mail will be generated when there is no activity in the cases.
In what format should notices be sent to this e-mail address?	Controls the format of the e-mails – either **HTML** or **Text**. HTML is the preferred format.
Show all cases for this e-mail address?	Displays a list of all of the cases for which the user is configured to receive NEFs.
Add additional cases for noticing	Allows users to add cases in which they are not an active participant, but would like to receive NEFs. **There is no free look associated with these Notices.**
These cases will send notice *per filing*. *(default method)*	An e-mail will be sent for each individual NEF.
These cases will send notice *as a summary report*. *(alternate method)*	One daily summary e-mail notice that lists all the filings for that day will be sent.

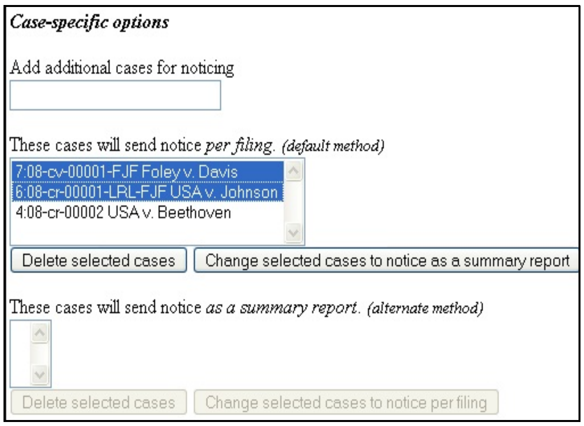
To receive NEF's in additional cases that interest you, enter the case number(s) in the *Add additional cases for noticing* text field in the bottom right pane and then either click **Enter** or **Find This Case**. After selecting the appropriate case(s), click **Add case(s)**. This will add the case(s) to the list of cases in the default method of service list (the first list of cases).

To move cases from the default method list to the alternate method list, the user should click the case number(s) in the primary list and then click the **Change selected cases to notice as a summary report** button (if summary noticing is the default method, then this button will be labeled **Change selected cases to notice per filing**). The cases will be moved to the alternate method list. To delete cases from the default method list or the alternate method list, select the case(s) and then click the **Delete selected cases** button.

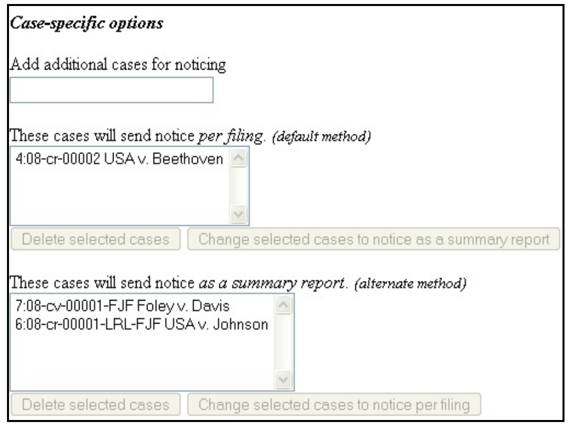
In the following screens, only the bottom right portion of the E-mail Information screen is shown.

E-mail Information Screen – Case-Specific Options

Before Moving Cases from Default Method List to Alternate Method List



After Moving Cases from Default Method List to Alternate Method List



For secondary email addresses, an additional option, **Should this e-mail address receive notice for all cases in which this individual is a participant?,** appears in the Configuration Options section of the screen. The user can answer **Yes** or **No**.

To remove an email address, the user should click on the address on the left pane. This will cause the email address to display in a text field on the right pane, along with all the configuration options and case lists (if any) associated with the email address. The user should remove the email address from the text field. If the user wants to change the email address to a different one, the user should immediately type the new address in the text field. **If the user clicks anywhere outside the text field while a complete email address is not in the text field, all of the configuration options and case lists will disappear from the screen, and the previous email address and settings will be removed.**

Miscellaneous

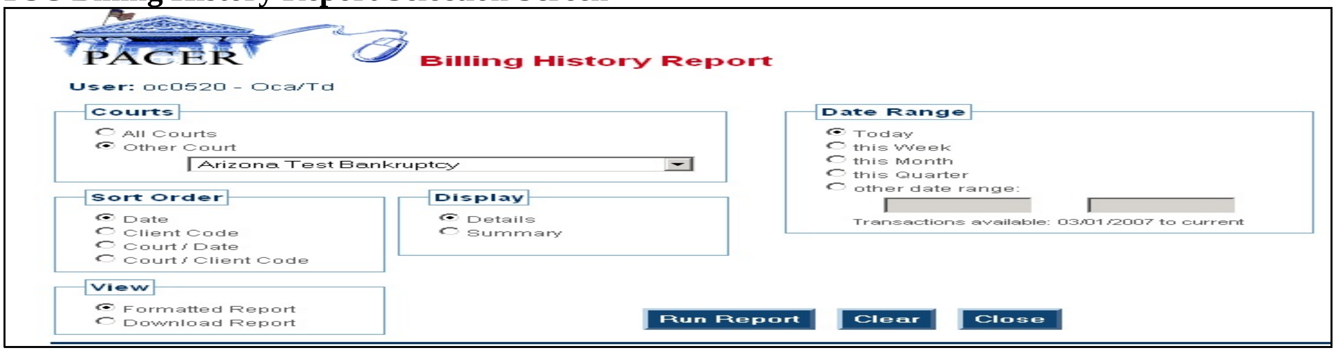
Daily Summary Report - The Daily Summary Report now sends notice indicating "**no transactions found for this time period**" to all summary recipients who did not receive a summary NEF from the regular summary report processing. This applies to anyone with summary delivery method preference who has opted into the function via a new control accessible via the E-mail Information screen.

List of Cases - The Maintain Your Email Account ⇨ *Email Information* screens now provide for each email address a complete list of all cases for which that email address is configured to receive NEFs.

PACER BILLING

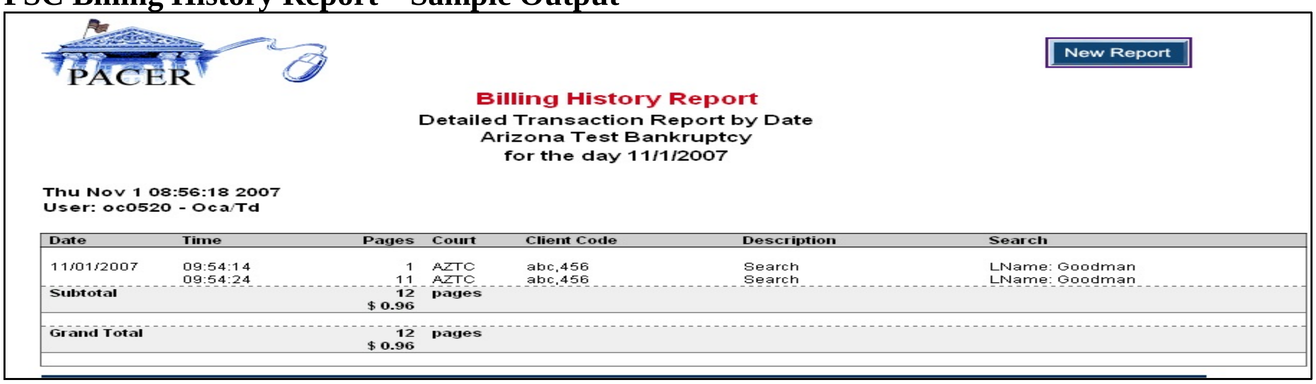
When the Review Billing History option is selected in CM/ECF a new browser window will open outside of CM/ECF. From this screen the user can search for transactions in recent months for a specific court or all courts. A message inside the Date Range box provides a specific range of dates for which transactions are available. The court from which the PACER user came will be selected by default.

PSC Billing History Report Selection Screen



Data will be retrieved from the central billing transaction database and formatted according to the options selected by the user, as in this example:

PSC Billing History Report – Sample Output



Transactions for months prior to those available via the CM/ECF Billing History Report can be obtained via the Review Transaction History option within the Account Information section of the Pacer Service Center site.

PDF IMAGES

PDF Headers

The CM/ECF software will now correctly place the PDF header on all scanned PDF documents in the correct position. Previously the PDF header on scanned documents would occasionally appear in positions other than the top of the page. The software now correctly estimates the page size of the PDF documents so that the header is placed correctly.

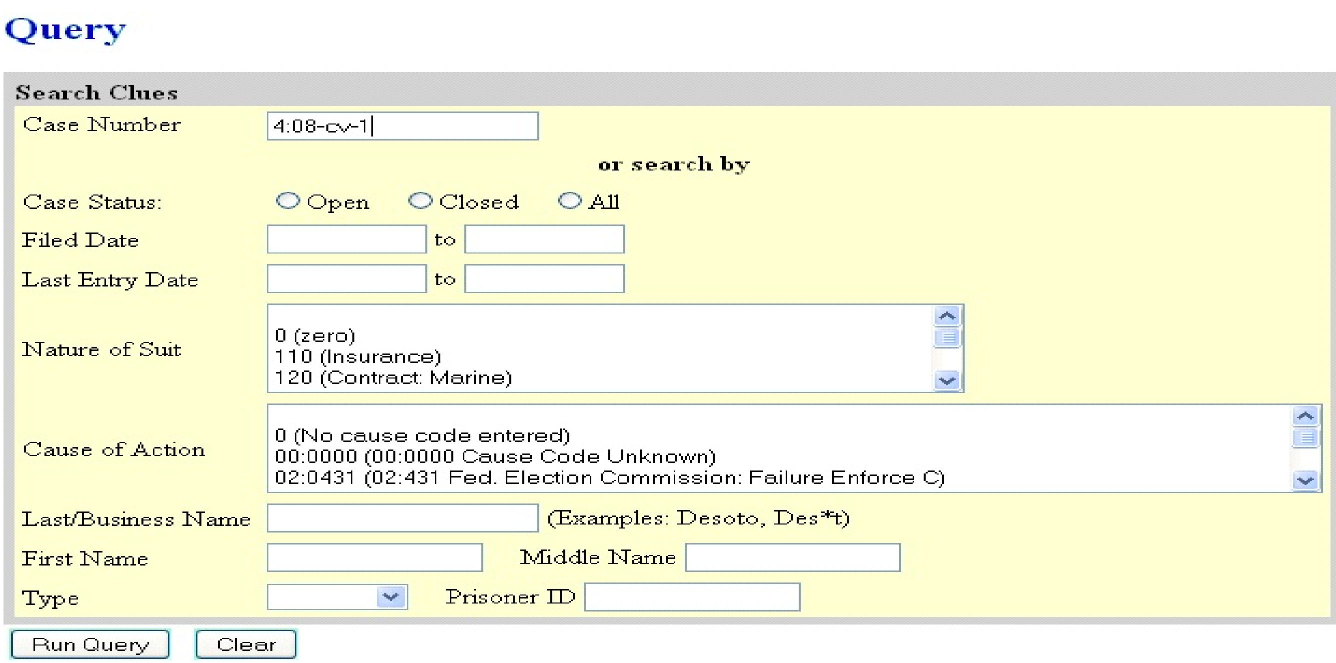
File Size Limitation

When a PDF that is larger than the set document file size limit is loaded during docketing, the error message now includes the file size of the current PDF.

QUERY

The Query screen was modified to provide the following options to allow for more refined searching:

> The user now has the ability to search by name in combination with case status, filed date, last entry date, nature of suit or cause of action.
> A *Cause of Action* select list was added.



Queries now can be run by entering a case number or any combination of the following:

Case Status	Cause of Action	Type
Filed Date	Last/Business Name	Prisoner ID
Last Entry Date	First Name	
Nature of Suit	Middle Name	